

#### **IV. COMPREHENSIVE CHILD FIND SYSTEM (34 CFR 303.321)**

The State of Missouri ensures that the statewide system includes a comprehensive child find system that is consistent with Part B of IDEA (34 CFR 300.128) and meets the requirements to identify, locate, and evaluate all eligible infants and toddlers and to determine which children are receiving needed early intervention services.

The lead agency, DESE, with the advice and assistance of the SICCC, is responsible for implementing the child find system. It is the policy of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that all children birth through 20 who are disabled and in need of special services are identified, located, and evaluated.

The Child Find System in Missouri is coordinated with all other major efforts to locate and identify children conducted by State agencies responsible for administering the various education, health, and social service programs relevant to this part, tribes and tribal organizations that receive money under Part C, and other tribes and tribal organizations as appropriate, including efforts in the:

1. Child Find authorized under Part B of the Act;
2. Maternal and Child Health program under Title V of the Social Security Act;
3. Medicaid's Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) program under Title XIX of the Social Security Act;
4. Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act;
5. Head Start Act; and,
6. Supplemental Security Income program under Title XVI of the Social Security Act.

The lead agency, with the advice and assistance of the SICCC, takes steps to ensure that:

1. there will not be unnecessary duplication of effort by the various agencies involved in the State's child find system under this part, and
2. the State will make use of the resources available through each public agency in the State to implement the child find system in an effective manner.

Part C funds may be used to improve collaboration in order to identify and evaluate at-risk infants and toddlers, make referrals to other available services for such children, and to conduct periodic follow-up to determine if the status of the infant or toddler has changed and may be eligible for early intervention services as provided by Part C.

The following procedures are used by primary referral sources for referring a child to the appropriate public agency within the system for:

1. Evaluation and assessment, in accordance with 34 CFR 303.322 and 303.323, or
2. As appropriate, the provision of services, in accordance with 34 CFR 303.342(a) or 303.345.

Primary referral sources are informed about the referral process and procedures through the public awareness brochure and numerous presentations. This information is also available through any participating state agency. The DESE ensures that referrals to First Steps are made to a system point of entry within two working days after a child is identified as being potentially eligible for the State's early intervention program.

Primary referral sources include:

1. Hospitals, including prenatal and postnatal care facilities;
2. Physicians;
3. Parents;
4. Child-care programs;
5. Local educational agencies (including special education and Parents as Teachers (SB 658));
6. Public health facilities;
7. Other social service agencies; and,
8. Other health care providers.